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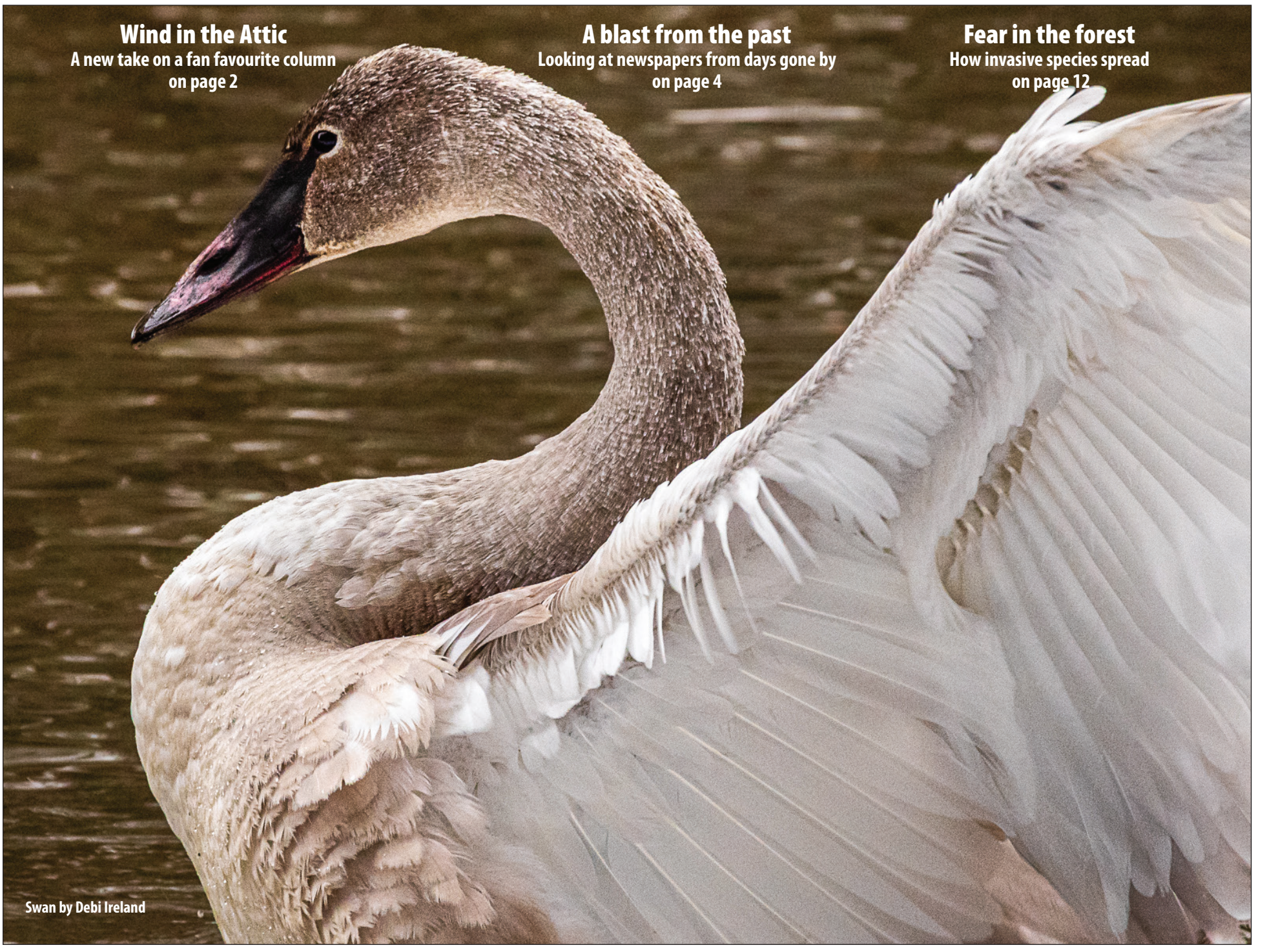

Wind in the Attic
A new take on a fan favourite column
on page 2

A blast from the past
Looking at newspapers from days gone by
on page 4

Fear in the forest
How invasive species spread
on page 12

Swan by Debi Ireland

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Wind in the Attic

WATCH THIS space! We're soon going to be trying something completely different. And still, just 500 words at a time. Teachers and writers call this flash fiction, and it'll be a grand opportunity for any shorter attention spans! I'm also hoping to encourage children to read a friendly community newspaper, perhaps even out loud. There's nothing like those enduring double practices of good listening, and meaningful family time.

I'll feature individual schoolchildren in each weekly instalment, basing every fictional chronicle on combinations of kids I've either parented, taught or known. I'm still in touch with many. Plus I clearly remember my own formative years. Students see and say personalized things, yet are all perfectly human. Everyone learns this as we march through schooldays, and further beyond.

DEB REED
Wind in the Attic

Charles Dickens also wanted to record his experiences and reflections. He was profoundly impacted by Victorian Britain's industrialization, its social divides, and its traditional management of Yuletide. His beloved novella, *A Christmas Carol*, was actually a ghost story, and has never gone out of print or style. It's still universally referenced as a poignant fable where one elderly conflicted soul is redeemed from most of his 'deadly sins' to become a loving individual. Contrary to some popular belief, Dickens presented the story as a single complete publication (in December 1843), divided into staves, or staffs, like musical lines in an actual carol. He did serialize some of his longer works like *David Copperfield* and *Oliver Twist* into affordable monthly booklets.

I'll respectfully borrow from Dickens' serialization style. My idea is to generate 500-word stand-alone stories to create one cohesive collection. No-one pretends to be Dickens (who could?), but I'm inspired through him to try and represent, not only metaphorical Everyman (a 'typical' person), but almost every child who might be navigating an average present-day Ontario classroom on one particular day. Dickens himself might have appreciated each of these tiny modern insights. He consciously examined the hearts of his younger characters (like Pip, the Artful Dodger, Tiny Tim), and made them significant. Allegory is a special power and privilege of authors. Perhaps young readers will discover something familiar, fascinating, reassuring or informative about our upcoming first-person 'journals'. We hope our instalment concept will help offer good-natured short-term alternatives in read-aloud media. Its 27 staves will be matched with diverse original watercolour portraits.

Our series will be called *Wind in the Attic*. Thoughts begin in the 'upstairs' of human creativity. Hearts will have their say too. The finalizing chapter will be a female elementary teacher's voice. Her recurring responsibility is to safely bring the whole world to her classroom-bound students. Some are restless, some keen, and some aren't ready to be there. The teacher, mostly on her own, will try to reach and guide every learner, best she can, with all she has to work with, all she's so far acquired, understood, believed and rejected, forever hoping to help steer her charges towards peaceful, grateful citizenship in this brave and beautiful country.

County Life

The following inserts are being distributed with County Life this week:

Canadian Tire

Foodland *

Minden Valumart *

Rexall *

Shoppers Drug Mart Haliburton *

Todd's Independent *

All inserts are to selected distribution areas.

For information on how your flyer can be inserted each week in County Life please contact Melissa Armstrong at **613-332-2002** or **melissa@haliburtonpress.com**

Following the beat of the music

I HAD the pleasure of going to a holiday dance recital this past weekend. Groups of children from the age of three to teens loaded up the stage and performed well rehearsed dance numbers of all sorts. The costumes were magical, the music great, and the dancers looked great.

The instructors, in muted tones of clothing, stood to the sides of each dance and especially for the younger dancers, went through the paces of each routine. I am sure the thinking was that at any time, dancers could look over if lost and see what they needed to do. I noticed, however, that many of the dancers did not take their eyes off the instructors. I am sure that each of them had practiced and rehearsed their moves countless times, but there did seem to be something about having access to the teacher displaying the moves that made many rely completely on the display rather than memory.

The effect on the performance then was many turned heads looking to the side, nervous moves catching up to the teacher›s gestures and some mix ups. However, every now and then there would be one or two dancers that were confident, eyes to the audience, adding flare and panache to all the moves, in every age category.

TERESA JORDAN
Community Living Contemplations

All this has me thinking about how we show up in the world. Not that they got all the moves right, but their dramatic flare smoothed over any wrong moves. We can sometimes be hesitant looking around for someone to lead so that we can follow in their footsteps and that will take us to where we are going. Sometimes, we arewatching, searching for an example, a model, a mentor to show us how they handled things.

And sometimes, we do really know our stuff, we are really confident and we have a presence that catches people›s attention. I guess, it comes down to how well we have prepared, how comfortable we are in the task and who is watching. For today I would urge us to look our audience straight in the eye and conduct ourselves with the confidence of a young girl in a tutu that is following no one but the beat of the music.

HHHSF welcomes Timber to the team

EMILY STONEHOUSE
County Life Editor

Executive Director of HHHS Foundation Melanie Klodt Wong and David Blodgett, the chair of the board, pose with Timber the Wolf, the new furry friend of the foundation. /submitted

There's a new face in town for the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation (HHHSF), and he's extra cute.

Timber the Eastern Wolf - this year's stuffed animal for the foundation - can be found at Foodland in Haliburton and Minden, Independent in Haliburton, CIBC in Minden, and Bank of Montreal in Haliburton.

"We live in the wild, beautiful world of Haliburton," said Melanie Klodt Wong, the executive director of the foundation. So for the last little while, we've been focusing on local animals."

Many would recall seeing "Quilbur", a lovable porcupine stuffed animal, which was the featured creature last year. This year, with their featured animal as a regional wolf species, the HHHSF also paired up with Haliburton Forest and Wild Life Reserve, and will be selling Timber from the Kennisis Lake site as well.

"What this really does is raise awareness," said Klodt Wong. "It's a fundraiser for the foundation, but the biggest part is the awareness in the community, plus, it brings a nice hug to someone in the community as well."

She shared that the cozy critters are often shared with local long term care homes, and bring joy and comfort to many across the region and beyond. "I really love them," Klodt Wong chuckled. "Some people will come in and say they collect them every year."

The stuffed animal fundraising program has been going on since 2006, with a different animal selected each year. At the Haliburton hospital site, a display has been set up featuring each critter over the years, with a puzzle capturing the full class picture of all of them together. "We are building up enough for the next class picture," said Klodt Wong.

The animals are $30, with all proceeds going directly back to the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation, which is an incorporated registered Canadian charity that financially supports the hospital and health care facilities in Haliburton County for capital projects, equipment, education programs and community support services.

While the Provincial Government funds the buildings and portions of physician recruitment, healthcare equipment programming is reliant entirely on fundraising initiatives and community support.

If a stuffed animal isn't of interest to anyone on your list, Klodt Wong also suggested looking into the foundation's lottery tickets. "We will write the Christmas cards and put the tickets in the cards," she said, noting that the final draw will take place just after Christmas.

For more information around any fundraising efforts made by the foundation, please call 705-457-1580.

"Make sure you pick up Timber while they last," said Klodt Wong, noting that the stuffed animals fly off the shelves, and are only around in limited numbers. "We ran out before Thanksgiving last time, so we can't always guarantee that they'll stick around."

Lakelands Public Health offering free radon test kits

Radon, an invisible gas, is the second-leading cause of lung cancer in Canada. Lakelands Public Health is pleased to be offering 750 free radon test kits to community members this year, as part of the Evict Radon National Study. Community members who receive a kit must agree to be a part of the study, set up the device for at least 91 days, and then send the kit (prepaid envelope included) to be analyzed.

"The Lakelands Public Health region has been identified as priority for the researchers at Evict Radon – not necessarily because there are high levels of radon in our area, but because there is insufficient data about the radon levels in our area," said Dr. Thomas Piggott, Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer at Lakelands Public Health. "The study results will help us learn more about radon levels in our community to support future programming so that we can work with municipalities to better understand and mitigate local risks," he added.

What is Radon?

Radon is a naturally occurring, radioactive gas that comes from the breakdown of uranium found in rocks and soil. It can seep into cracks, gaps, and openings in a home's foundation. When radon enters confined spaces, like a house, it can build up and become harmful.

Radon is invisible, odourless, and tasteless, so testing is the only way to know how much radon is in one's home and whether action is needed. When inhaled, radon traps radioactive particles in the lungs. This creates damage and, over years, can develop into lung cancer. In Canada, radon is the second-leading cause of lung cancer – after tobacco smoke.

Where Can I Get a Kit?

Test kits are limited to one per household and must be picked up by a person who lives in the residence. Test kits are available while quantities last, and will be distributed "first come, first served". Starting on Dec. 15, 2025, radon test kits can be picked up at:

Northumberland County, Haliburton County, and the City of Kawartha Lakes:

- Local public libraries

- County of Peterborough:
- Local municipal offices
- City of Peterborough:

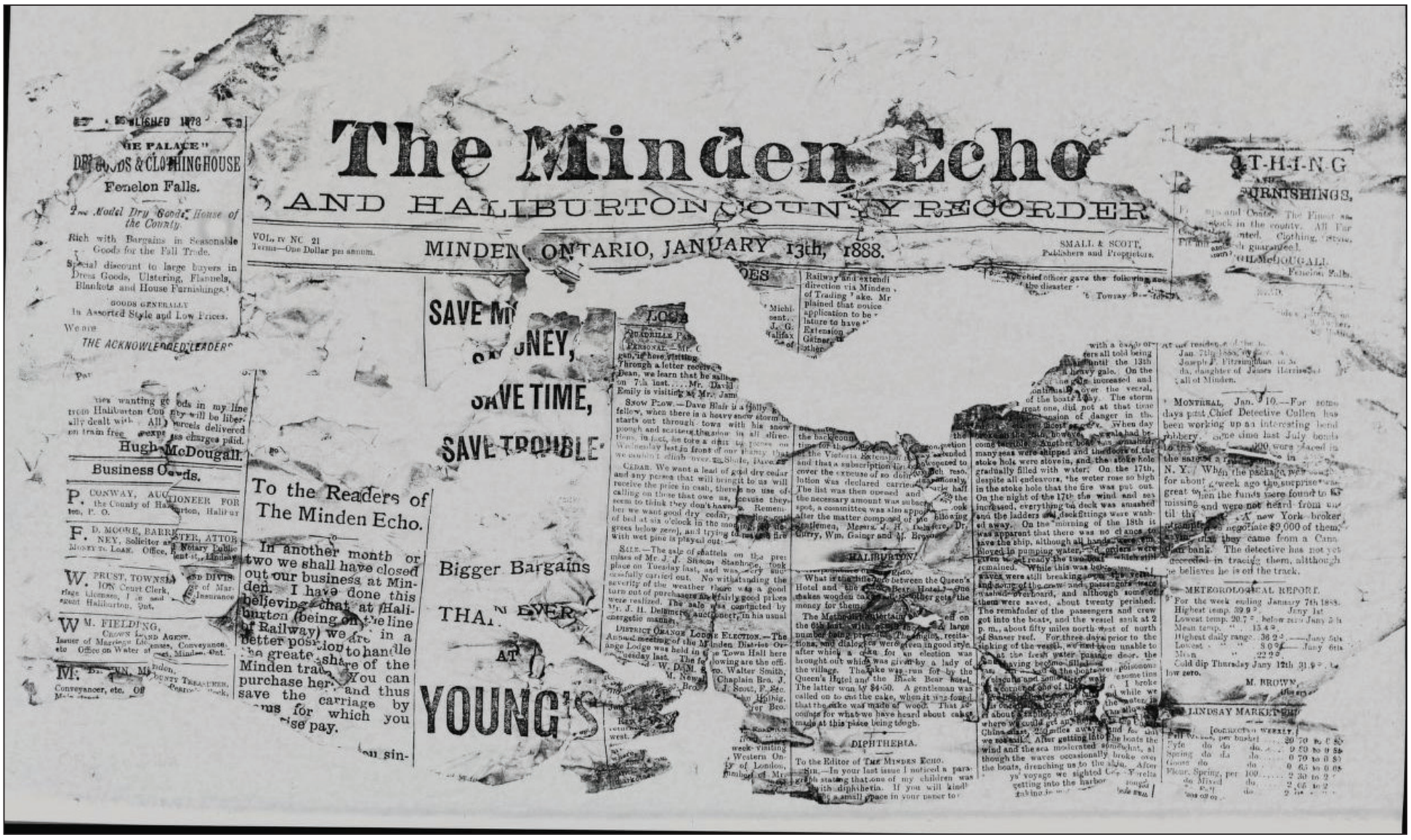
Lakelands Public Health – Peterborough Office, 3rd Floor, 185 King Street

Distribution locations are subject to change, and new locations may be added. Visit LakelandsPH.ca/radon or contact our office to determine the location closest to you. Community members of Alderville First Nation, Curve Lake First Nation, or Hiawatha First Nation who are interested in participating in the Evict Radon National Study are invited to contact Lakelands Public Health for more information.

More Information

Radon kits can also be purchased from EvictRadon.org. To learn more about the health effects of radon, visit LakelandsPH.ca/radon.

Submitted


The Minden Echo
AND HALIBURTON COUNTY RECORDER
VOL. IV NO. 21 MINDEN, ONTARIO, JANUARY 13th, 1888. SMALL & SCOTT, Publishers and Proprietors.
To the Readers of The Minden Echo.
In another month or two we shall have closed out our business at Minden. I have done this believing that at Haliburton (being on the line of Railway) we are in a better position to handle a greater share of the Minden trade. You can purchase here and thus save the carriage by us for which you otherwise pay.
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Hugh McDougall.
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DIPHTHERIA.
To the Editor of THE MINDEN ECHO.
SIR,—In your last issue I noticed a paragraph stating that one of my children was with diphtheria. If you will kindly give a small space in your paper to
METEOROLOGICAL REPORT.
For the week ending January 7th 1888.
LINDSAY MARKETS.

Newspaper archives tap into days gone by

EMILY STONEHOUSE
County Life Editor

The holidays are a time of year where we connect, we share stories, and we look to the past.

And this year, thanks to the newly digitized newspaper archives, there is a tool available for all to connect with the stories of our community.

The Haliburton Highlands Digital Archives (HHDA) project has been in the works for over two years. With a hard launch taking place this past fall, the online platform has stored over 7000 newspapers from our community, dating back to the year 1888; an edition of the *Minden Echo,* seen above.

The 7,000 issues equates to over 170,000 pages of scanned materials. With the scanning completed by MES Hybrid Document Systems, project coordinator Ted Brandon shared that the committee is "over the moon" with the quality of the scans. "They really did the project, not like they were a contractor, but like it was their own project," he said, noting the high-end resolution that allows the search function of the site to work on the thousands of editions. "It really allows people to narrow in on those details."

While some internet archives have a cost associated with accessing the files, the Haliburton Highlands Digital Archives are entirely free. The site can be accessed by searching www.hhda.ca, where the entire available collection resides. Once in the site, there is a search option along the top of the page. Brandon noted that it is key to select the "search text contents" toggle, as opposed to the default "search metadata" option.

The text contents allows the search function to seek any key words you may be looking for. Another tip is to add quotation marks around key words you are seeking, that allows the search function to hone in with greater detail.

"I think it's important that we ensure all these newspapers are saved," noted Brandon, referencing the many papers featured in the collection, including the *Haliburton Echo,* the *Minden Times*, the *Highlander,* and the many iterations of each paper that evolved over the years. "But it's equally as important that the public has easy access to it. It's about preserving our history."

Brandon shared that since the fall launch, the public has been excited about access to the online resource. "The people who seem to be most excited are former reporters," he laughed. "But it's all been very positive, especially with the ease of use."

While the collection contains over 170,000 pages, Brandon noted that there are still some gaps. The committee is currently seeking papers from prior to the year 1980. If anyone has old collections stowed away, he encourages folks to reach out to www.hhda.ca, where they can connect with a committee member about their findings.

And while they continue their search for papers of days gone by, Brandon is also looking to the future. "The goal is to keep the archive as up to date as possible," he said, noting that once a month, current editions of local newspapers will be scanned and added to the archives. "Often we remember about 10 per cent of any event," he laughed. "It's great to look back and see the whole picture."

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Snowshoeing, then and now

LIKE MOST people, I enjoy snowshoeing. Putting them on is another matter, however.

Usually, this involves a series of twists and turns, contortions, grunts, falls, winces, hops, and assorted backflips and tumbles. Putting on the second one is even worse.

STEVE GALEA
Beyond 35

Snowshoeing, in short, is a member of that group of sports that requires you to touch your toes even before you start. Nothing good has ever come of this.

Nevertheless, the inventor of the sport decided to make the first part of snowshoeing an ordeal for a reason. I suspect it was so people would commit to the rest of the activity.

Basically, a snowshoer thinks, "I didn't go through all that for nothing. Might as well wear these things for an hour and walk around a bit."

This is necessary because, if you think about it, snowshoeing is just a walk in a cold, snowy environment. Often, in a circle. And, objectively, this is not all that appealing.

I know. There are those among you who would beg to differ.

That's fine. But let me just say, I think we can all agree that the most difficult job that ever existed must have been being the first door-to-door snowshoe salesman.

Knock-knock.

"Who's there?" the owner of the home would ask.

"Snowshoe salesman," our hero would answer.

"Snowshoe salesman who?" the home owner would reply.

(They didn't know how close they were to inventing the knock-knock joke.)

Typically, the cave owner would come to the door carrying a club.

Then, after enduring a brief pummeling, the snowshoe salesman would start his sales pitch.

After a few minutes, the prospective customer would say, "So, this new recreational activity requires me to contort my body uncomfortably and touch my toes?"

"Precisely," the salesman would say.

"Don't we already do that with skiing or tobogganing?" the potential customer would ask.

"Yes, but only after you hit a tree," the salesman replied. "These snowshoes let you walk atop the snow at a manageable speed, so it's harder to hit a tree and easier to do a loop,"

"Loop?" the client asked.

The snowshoe salesman would then explain that immediately after the first set of snowshoes were created, the inventor invented the loop.

More explanation would ensue, which would then lead to the question, "So you are saying, after all that effort you end up right back where you started?"

"Yes," the salesperson confirmed.

The added value brought about by the loop is generally what closed the deal. For before the loop was invented, people would just walk out in the wilderness and never return.

Remember, in those days, backtracking in the snow to where you started was still an imprecise science. Fortunately, the snowshoeing loop solved all that.

Before long it caught on. Mostly because, what else was there to do in winter when you lived in a cave without good Internet?

In those early days, families would go snowshoeing just for the chance to see the person ahead of them get snow down the back of their neck when they had to pass under a snow-laden bough. Some things never change. In those pre-knock-knock joke days, this and accidentally getting your snowshoes lodged in the entrance to a hibernating bear's den was considered the height of humour.

Even so, snowshoeing was slow to gain the sort of popularity it has attracted today. But, you know, once people tried it on a snowshoeing loop, they eventually came around.

Nature in your backyard

County Life welcomes photo submissions depicting life in the Highlands. Email emily@ haliburtonpress.com. Please ensure images are high resolution - 200 dpi, 10 inches at its longest edge.

Peekaboo Pine Marten by Tammy Nash

Visiting duck by Debi Ireland

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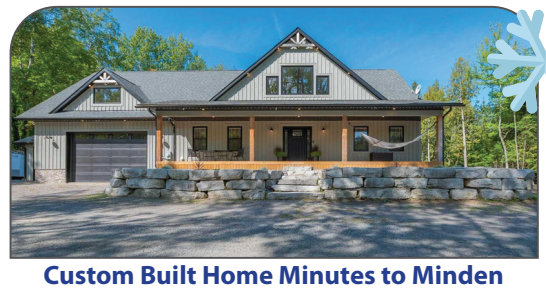

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Send your letters to the editor to emily@haliburtonpress.com. Letters must be signed and include a phone number.

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It's a Wonderful Life

EMILY STONEHOUSE
County Life Editor

My kids have entered the era of Christmas movies. It used to be short films about elves and reindeer; their attention span not lasting much longer than the designated 30-minute windows.

But over the years, it's shifted and changed. They can sit still for longer periods of time; their wiggles and wisps of energy settling into a cool calm with age.

Home Alone, Elf, Muppet's Christmas Carol, Klaus. A Christmas Story. There are some old favourites, and some new specials. Sometimes I wonder what it takes for something to become a classic; the ones that have stood out over the years seem to have cult followings, their messages generally hovering around good will and high spirits.

And that doesn't even get into the Hallmark side of things, where an entire channel commits to movies about a city CEO falling in love with a Christmas tree farmer in her hometown. Each year, my girlfriends and I dedicate an entire day to drinking hot cocoa and devouring as many of these movies as possible; our brains comfortably numb by the time the sun sets.

I've long been told that I have tendencies that lean towards 'old soul', and that becomes apparent when I share my favourite Christmas movie of all time: *It's a Wonderful Life.*

I was first shown the film by my Grade 5 teacher, much to the chagrin of every other classmate. The black and white grittiness of the shots and the pace of the dialogue had the other 10-year-olds in the class rolling their eyes, but I was captivated.

The film came out in 1946, and stars Jimmy Stewart and Donna Reed; two young lovebirds who try their best to climb up the ladder of life, but feel kicked down time and time again. When George Bailey, played by Stewart, loses a large sum of money, he faces a crossroad of moving ahead in life or calling it quits. He is then given a chance - through his Guardian Angel, Clarence (played by Henry Travers) - to see what life would be like if he were never born.

A captivating concept and something that shows the rawness and fragility of human existence, and a reminder of what's truly important in life. And spoiler alert, this film clearly shows that there is more to life than money.

It was this premise that caused the film to completely flop upon release. Director Frank Capra was accused of being 'anti-capitalist'. According to the magazine *Philadelphia* in an article dedicated to behind the scenes of *It's a Wonderful Life,* on May 26, 1947, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) issued a memo stating, "With regard to the picture *It's a Wonderful Life*, [redacted name] stated in substance that the film represented rather obvious attempts to discredit bankers by casting Lionel Barrymore as a "Scrooge-type" so that he would be the most hated man in the picture. This, according to these sources, is a common trick used by Communists. [In] addition, [redacted name] stated that, in his opinion, this picture deliberately maligned the upper class, attempting to show the people who had money were mean and despicable characters."

The movie continued to have a certain following, and was even nominated for an Academy Award for best picture, but never solidified its spot as a Christmas classic.

It wasn't until 1974, after its copyright had ended and the film became public domain, that it started to gain momentum. Television channels were able to run the movie free of charge, and suddenly, everyone and their brother had seen it. The fans snowballed, gathering speed as the political tone of the time pushed back against capitalism and wound in free will and the beauty of life into their beliefs.

There are countless other facts and figures around the film. I keep them tucked into a cozy spot in my brain, sharing whatever I know as I watch the film with my husband each year, cuddled by the fire.

It's a movie that everyone should watch, at least once. And on dark days, I find myself thinking about it. About how each action of help, each gesture of kindness, each motion to support others, it makes a difference in the spiderweb of life that is woven. And if you were never here, that intricately wound web would cease to exist.

So as we look to the new year, let us remember that on the bright days and even more importantly, on the dark ones, we've really had a wonderful life.

Top 10 reasons there were so few musicians when Jesus was born

STEVE GALEA
Humour Columnist

Aside from the Little Drummer Boy, there were not a lot of musicians in Bethlehem when Jesus was born. When you think about it, that's kind of odd considering the importance of the occasion. But, as always, there were logical reasons why this was the case. Here are the top 10.

1. Most musicians accidentally went to a club called The Nativity Scene club on the other side of town.
2. No one took it seriously when they found out the opening act was a boy with a drum.
3. I don't care how good your stage show is, it's hard to follow a choir of angels.
4. First rule of showbiz: Never work with animals and kids.
5. Agent told them that no one would ever remember this venue.
6. There was no room at the Inn.
7. Pyrotechnics and a stable full of animals don't mix.
8. The little town of Bethlehem was not exactly known for its music scene.
9. Tickets were so expensive only three kings attended.
10. A lot of them followed the wrong star and ended up in Samaria.

Lights

Lantern of Moon dangling up in Sky, casting its light onto Snow,
illuminating the path for a stray raccoon bumbling its way between trees,
white lights twining around their trunks, trickling along their branches, twinkling like stars
that pierce the night Sky,
my eyes following the bandit raccoon from here on the street, my feet frozen as my Breath,
as I watch the lone raccoon forge its path through the Snow, prowling its way beneath the window
of a bungalow,
where a tree stands, swathed in shimmer and glimmer, lights blinking on its branches. far from the darkness
of the forest,
where its con-freres grow in silence in the Snow, Moon glow bathing their branches,
the tree uprooted from its Home, transported to a place where the quiet of forest is replaced
by a cacophony of strange sounds that the tree doesn't recognize,
knowing only the warbling of birds and drilling of woodpeckers, unfamiliar with voices and
laughter and music,
as its branches are tugged at, the tree smothered in garlands and baubles and lights, it can barely breathe,
missing the pureness of forest Air that it shared with its con-freres, their branches dripping with pinecones,
the lone tree standing in the window, barricading it from the world Outside,
where a raccoon wobbles through the Snow, searching for scraps to feast on,
where I stand in the middle of the street, my feet rooted to the frozen earth, cloaked in Snow,
like the tree was once rooted to the forest floor alongside its kin,
my eyes drinking in the tiny blue lights weaving through its branches,
my lungs inhaling Air that tastes crisp and cold as it trickles and prickles its way down into my chest,
peering at this tree in the window that will never grow old, that doesn't know
how its presence brightens the lives of those that adorned it in all the shimmer and glimmer,
twined lights through its branches that twinkle like stars up there in night Sky,
the dangling lantern of Moon that the tree can see but no longer feel its light bathe its branches,
like the tops of Snow laden pines in the forest, as they stand together in silence on this quietest of nights,
far from this bungalow where their con-frere stands by the window, dreaming of Home,
as the bandit raccoon bumbles its way back across the deserted street, where I still stand,
rooted to the frozen ground,
my eyes drinking in all the lights, the silence of this quietest of nights,
splintered by my footsteps crunching across Snow, as I turn to go,
wishing the tree glimmering in the window and the ones twined in lights, Outside,
Good Night.

Sylvie Kalenda

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May you find health, happiness and peace during the holiday season and through the coming year.

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1211 GELERT ROAD $1,200,000

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Nature in your backyard

County Life welcomes photo submissions depicting life in the Highlands. Email emily@ haliburtonpress.com. Please ensure images are high resolution - 200 dpi, 10 inches at its longest edge.

Barred Owl by Jill Moulton

Preparing for flight by Debi Ireland

Woodpecker by Elaine Bell

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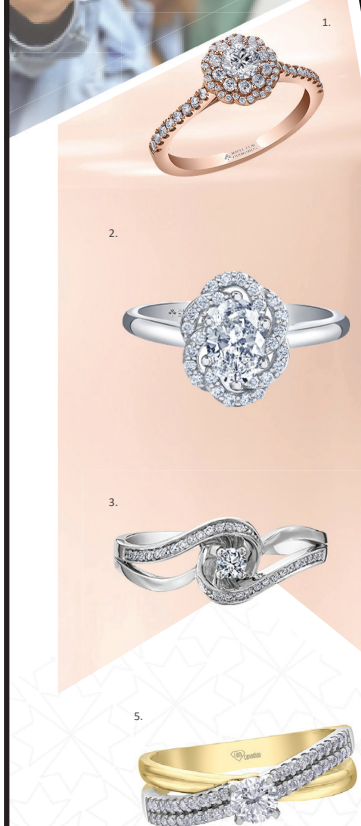

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Baby girl by Tammy Nash

Black squirrel by Jill Moulton

Open wings by Debi Ireland

Gray Jay by Tammy Nash

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Invasive species present real threat to Haliburton Forest

EMILY STONEHOUSE
County Life Editor

A close-up of the beech bark disease, which is rapidly spreading across the county. The impacts of the disease are irreversible once it has taken form. /submitted

It's no secret that the status of the environment is hobbling on unsteady ground.

But while climate change exists as an over-arching statement that references a variety of crises near and far, one particular concern is prevalent on a local stage: invasive species.

"Invasive species kill things, and they change the environment," said Malcolm Cockwell, the managing director for Haliburton Forest and Wild Life Reserve. "And those are two different things."

One disease many will have likely heard of is the beech bark disease, where an invasive beech scale insect feeds on the bark of the tree, creating hollowed cracks that allow a native canker fungi to enter, killing the tree from the inside out.

Cockwell noted that the disease was first identified around 15 years ago locally, and started spreading about a decade ago. It originally started in Atlantic Canada, arriving from Europe just over a century ago. The insect is believed to have arrived on an ornamental plant or a palette of products before slowly but surely making its way west.

"It's not strictly human activity that moves these," said Cockwell, referencing birds and other insects that may carry it from place to place. "But once they're here, they're here."

At this point, the disease has decimated approximately 10 per cent of the trees around Haliburton Forest. And while that may not sound like a lot, it equates to approximately 10,000 acres. "It has an irreversible impact," said Cockwell. "You end up with these parts of the forest where nothing else can grow for 100 years."

One of the main concerns around beech trees going extinct is the caloric intake for the local bear population. Bears rely heavily on beech nuts for sustenance, and with the absence of the crucial food, Cockwell fears for increased risk of human and bear conflict.

The shrivelled beech trees also form what Cockwell referred to as "zombie saplings", where the spreading tree creates offshoots which also carry the disease, and choke out the surrounding forest. "They will still be present," he said, "but they will become a highly invasive shrub."

When asked if climate change plays a direct role in the spread of invasive species, Cockwell noted that he is not entirely convinced. While there are a select few species that have changed in nature due to warming temperatures, there are not yet direct correlations between the two imminent threats. "I'm not really convinced climate change is at fault here," he said. "But we are strongly encouraging people to get educated about environmental issues like invasive species."

With the absence of a regional resource in terms of identifying and eradicating invasive species, Cockwell and the forestry staff at Haliburton Forest have naturally stepped into the role. "If you see something strange, take a picture and send it to us," he said. "We're happy to help identify it, as a public service."

Haliburton Forest and Wild Life Reserve owns and operates over 250,000 acres of hardwood timberland in Ontario, including 100,000 acres of predominantly hardwood timberland in Haliburton County. The properties were the first in Canada to be certified as sustainable by the Forest Stewardship Council.

With the risk of invasive species looming with each cut tree, Cockwell noted that it's not just about the financial impact of losing acres of forest. "The economics is one piece of the puzzle," he said. "But that's not the whole picture."

When asked about the rate of invasive species spread, Cockwell noted that to the human eye, it may pass at a glacial pace, but to the rate for the forest, it's significantly faster. At the current rate of the beech bark disease spreading, it will take 20 years to create 500 years of irreversible damage to the local forests. "We're just starting to see the real, long-term impact these species will have," said Cockwell, "and it's terrible. There's really no good news on the invasive species front."

Legion Events

Branch 441 Kinmount

Monday: Bid Euchre 1 p.m.
Tuesday: Closed
Wednesday: Mixed Darts, 7:30 p.m.
Thursday: Closed
Friday: Bingo- Doors open at 5 p.m., play at 6:45 p.m. Supper specials every Friday starting at 5 p.m. May purchase special and eat in club room downstairs. Clubroom opens at 4 p.m.
Saturday: Clubroom opens at 3 p.m. Meat draw 5:30 p.m.
Special events:
3rd Thursday of the month 7 p.m. executive meeting and 7:30 p.m. general meeting (members only)
3rd Sunday of the month Ladies Auxiliary Meeting (members only)
Hall rentals available at reasonable prices. Call 705-488-3462 or 705-928-7105. We welcome everyone to our events and we look forward to seeing you!

Branch 129 Haliburton

Mondays: Bridge 1 p.m. Schofield Rm. Youth darts 6:30 to 8 p.m. Clubroom 10 to 18 years of age. All are welcome, no experience necessary
Tuesdays: League darts 7 p.m.
Wednesdays: Bid Euchre 1 p.m. start – Main Hall. Bingo doors open at 6 p.m. Bingo 7 p.m. FirstWed of each month with jackpot. Follow Facebook.com/Branch129 Bingo for the most up-to-date information
Thursdays: General Meeting third Thursday of the month, 6:30 p.m. All members urged to attend. Ladies Auxiliary last Thursday of the month at 1 p.m.
Fridays: Five meat draw, five prizes each draw, first draw 4:30 p.m., last draw 6:30 p.m. Tickets $2 per draw. Paul Sisson, MC. Friday fun darts from 4:30 p.m. and onwards. 50/50 Draw 5:40 p.m.
Whether you're planning a function for 10 or 200, call Cheryl Waller at 905-447-7741, email haliburtonlegionrentals@gmail.com or visit haliburtonlegion.com. Everyone is welcome! Club room hours: Mon. 3 to 6 p.m., Tues. 3 to 9 p.m., Wed/Thurs. 3 to 6 p.m. Fri. 3 to 7 p.m.

Branch 636 Minden

Lunch - Monday to Friday
Monday: Rug Hookers every second week. Bid Euchre 1 to 3 p.m.
Tuesday: Food 5 p.m. Canoe FM Bingo 6 p.m.
Thursday: Cribbage 1 to 3 p.m., Darts 7 to 9 p.m. and Euchre 7 to 9 p.m.
Every other Friday: Karaoke 8 to 11 p.m.
Friday Fish & Chips, Wings. Lunch 11a.m. to 2 p.m. and Dinner 4 to 7 p.m.
Saturday All Day Breakfast 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with three Meat draws at 11 a.m.
Call ahead any day for take-out: 705-286-4541.
Schedules are subject to change without notice. Check our Facebook page Minden Legion Branch 636 for more info.

Branch 624 Wilberforce

Hours - Sunday: Special Events Only, Monday: 7 to 10 p.m., Tuesday: Closed, Wednesday: 2 to 10 p.m., Thursday: 2 to 6 p.m., Friday: 2 to 11 p.m., Saturday: 2 to 9 p.m.
Sunday: Jan. 11 L.A Breakfast $10. 9 to 11 a.m.
Mondays: Jan. 5, 12, 19, 26 Darts $5/player 7 p.m.
Tuesdays: Jan. 6 Veteran's and Seniors Exercise Club. First meeting Jan. 6 starts at 1 p.m.
Jan. 20, 27 Veteran's and Seniors Exercise Club. Starts at 1:30 p.m.
Wednesdays: Jan. 7, 14, 21, 28 Darts $5/player 2pm
Jan. 7, 14, 21, 28 Quick Supper Menu changes weekly $10. 5:00pm-6:30pm
7, 14, 21, 28 Open Cribbage 6:30 – No need to pre-register
Thursdays: Jan. 1 President's Levy 1pm
Jan. 8, 22 HHHS Social Rec 10am
Fridays: Jan. 2, 16, 30 Fish and Chips 1pc/$15, 2pc/$20. 5 to 8 p.m.
Jan. 9, 23 Wings and Jam Session $15/lb. 5 to 8 p.m.
Jan. 9, 23 Community Care 55+ Lunch $17. noon
Saturday:
Jan. 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 Meat Draw 3 p.m.
Jan. 24 Pat and Phyllis Gallen Lake Trout Ice Fishing Derby. Weigh in 3 p.m.
Jan. 24 Karaoke 8 p.m.
Jan. 31 Nacho Average Trivia 7 p.m. $5/Player
Call the Legion for more info 705-448-222

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FOR SALE: Into the Blue Woodfired Pizza Business. Seasonal truck and catering business. Comes fully equipped and ready to go for the 2026 season. Contact info@abbeygardens.ca for more details and information

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Wanted: scrap cars and trucks. Cash paid. Please call **705-286-3758** or **cell 249-332-1212**

FOR RENT

Spacious one bedroom, one bath lower apartment located in the heart of Minden. The apartment provides a perfect blend of town and country living. Features include front door access, open concept living, in-unit laundry and outdoor living spaces, internet and preferential parking spots. $1,875 All inclusive plus shared hydro. Please Contact: **647-394-4899.** Photos available upon request.

Newly renovated 2-unit house on 9.5 scenic acres near Haliburton. LOWER: 1-bed, 1-bath. Features open-concept living, new appliances, in-unit laundry and outdoor living spaces. 10 minutes from Haliburton & perfect for peaceful living. Contact: info@aboveboardcarpentry.com **705-455-2196**

Cozy Older Home for Rent
2+ bedrooms. Large kitchen, large Livingroom, Dining room, sunroom and Full unfinished basement. $2000+ oil and wood heat, and Hydro. **Contact 647-768-7722**

Large one-bedroom apartment available for rent January 1st. Single, mature, non-smoking tenants preferred. Fully furnished. Includes water access, private entrance, and 400 sq foot screened porch. 10 minute drive from Haliburton. $1700 per month. Includes hydro, heat, wifi, and parking. Please call 705-457-0861. Pictures available upon request.

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Bancroft - All inclusive rental 2 bedroom & 2 bathroom mini home with garage and basement, new build. Available January 1. $2,900. Call **613-334-0357**

Bancroft - 2 bedroom walkout close to town $2,800 all inclusive New Build Contact **613-334-0357** for more information Available immediately.

Bancroft -Two bedroom walkout unit $2,500 All inclusive. Contact **613-334-0357** for more information Available immediately.

COMMERCIAL SPACE FOR RENT

Meeting Space for Rent: Blue Sky Studio at Haliburton Chiropractic. Bright open space downtown with private entrance and washroom. Available for rent by the hour, half or full day. Contact: **705-457-3500** info@haliburtonchiropractic.com

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Stained Glass Workshops. From beginner up. Registration open now. Learn the art of stained glass. Call Tom for details. 705-286-3628

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Community Events

Send your event listing to classifieds@haliburtonpress.com

Kwanzaa Storytime Party
When: Saturday, Dec. 27 from 10:30-11:30 a.m.
Where: Minden Hills Library
Enjoy stories, songs, and crafts that honour the seven principles of Kwanzaa – like creativity, and working together. Families will learn about the meaning of this celebration through storytelling, music, and hands-on fun. No registration required.

Recurring events

TOPS: Take Off Pounds Sensibly
When: Monday mornings 9:30 to 11 a.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion Branch 129, upper level
Admission: Yearly membership of $59
A non-profit/commercial network of weight-loss support groups, offers programs for healthy living and weight management.

Bridge for Seniors
When: Mondays at 1 p.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion - Schofield Rm
All welcome

Haliburton Legion Walking Group
When: Mondays at 9 to 10 a.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion - Remembrance Hall
A safe walking environment. Lead by an Occupational therapist.

Free Balanced Fitness, Active Social Senior Classes
When: Second, fourth Tuesday each month 10 to 11 a.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion - Remembrance Hall
All seniors are welcome. Group led by Registered Recreation Therapist

Bid Euchre
When: Wednesdays at 1 p.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion - Remembrance Hall
All welcome!

Duplicate Bridge - Please arrange for a partner.
When: Wednesdays at 12:45 at Park Lane Apartments.
Fridays at 12:45 at Haliburton Legion, Schofield Room.

Cards/Euchre/Cribbage
When: Thursdays at 2:30 p.m.
Where: St. George's Church, 617 Mountain Street

Lakeside Church Service
When: Sunday at 9 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.
Where: 9 Park Street, Haliburton.
Whoever you are, wherever you've been, all welcome here.

Weekly Meat Rolls
When: Every Saturday, 3 p.m.
Where: Coboconk Legion, Hwy 48 and 35
Join us for our weekly meat draw at the Coboconk Legion. Five spins for $10. The first four rounds are for highest and lowest score with two winners per round. The last round is for a prepare-it-yourself dinner for two. Additional spins for this round are available for $2 each. Call 705-454-8127 or email info@coboconklegion.ca for more information.

Friends of the HCPL Book Nook Hours
When: 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month - 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Where: Minden Hills Branch, 176 Bobcaygeon Rd. Minden
Variety of gently read books: thrillers, mysteries, romance, biographies, children, youth selections, Canadian authors, fiction, science fiction/fantasy, sports, spiritual and other non-fiction books. Bring a reusable bag. Payment is by cash donation. All money raised supports library enhancements and programmes for all county libraries.

Wilberforce Visitor Information Centre
When: Thursday to Monday 10 a.m. 4 p.m.
Where: 2786 Essonville Line, Wilberforce Curling Club
Mineral permission to collect forms, directions, geocaching information and GPS rentals, trails, events, and other general area information. Free Wi-Fi is also available.

Mineral Collecting - a fun outdoor activity
Adults and kids alike will delight in the chance to dig for buried treasure and bring home some colourful gems of your very own! Get a Permission to Collect form (free) from our website highlandseast.ca.

Geocaching - family friendly outdoor game
Often referred to as "treasure hunting with a high tech twist" because you use the geocaching.com website and either a GPS device or a smartphone. GPS Rentals are available from the Visitor Information Centre and come preloaded so you can start playing right away.

Trails
Whether you like to walk or run, ride a bike, horse or an ATV, one of Highlands East's trails is sure to please. Come enjoy the fall colours. Maps and descriptions can be found on our website highlandseast.ca.

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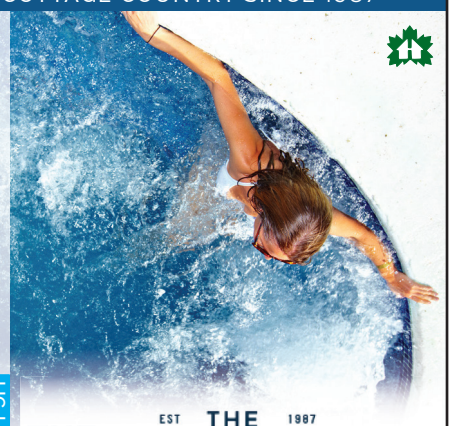

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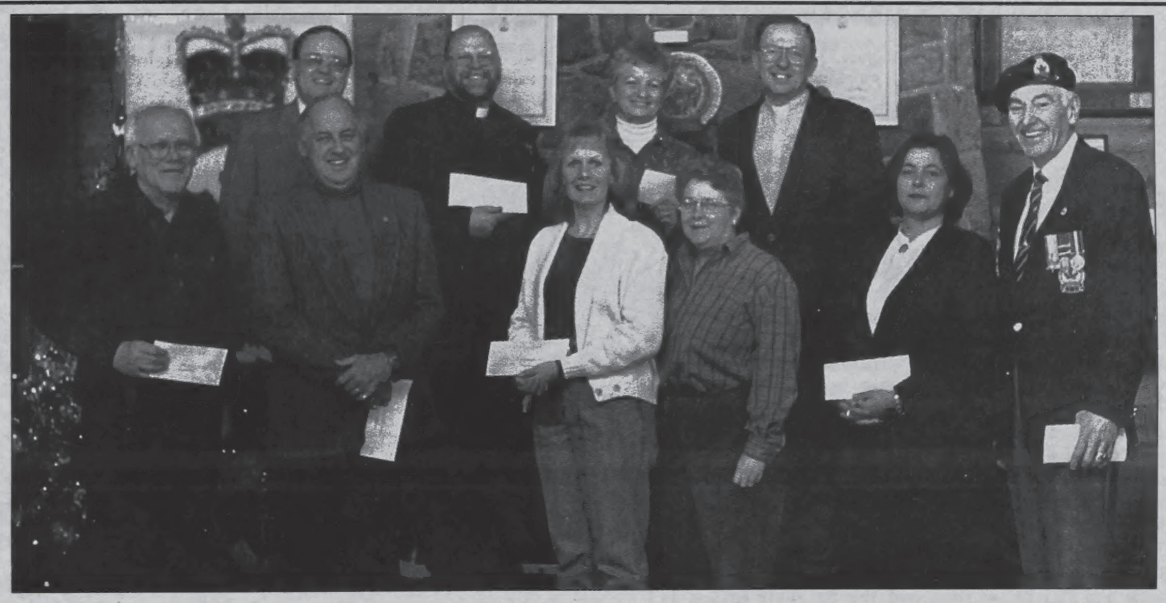
IN THE SPIRIT OF GIVING: Christmas came a wee bit early this year for some of the area's churches and non-profit organizations. It came in the form of some very generous donations from the Minden branch of the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 636. President Maurice Winterflood, right, distributed cheques to the various groups on December 16. Seen here are: (front row from left) Jerry Rome for the Haliburton County Rescue Sleigh Group which received $500; Mike Maher for Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church which received $1,000; Louise Leonard for the CSSM Christmas Box Campaign, $1,000, Barbara Walford-Davis for the Minden Food Bank, $500, Dianne Loucks for CHACE Inc., $1,000. Back row, from left, the Minden Bible Church was represented by Pastor Terry Wicks, $1,000; St. Paul's Anglican Church, represented by Rev. Brian Parker , $1,000; Mary Hicks also from the Minden Food Bank; and the Minden United Church, represented by Rev. Peter Walford-Davis, $1,000. The money was raised by the Legion through various lotteries and projects.



Warden selected Tuesday evening

Three in a row for Fearrey

by Jerry Grozelle

Murray Fearrey has been elected Warden of Haliburton County for the third consecutive term. Fearrey was nominated by Jeanne Anthon, who noted that Fearrey had agreed to shoulder the burden on behalf of the county. Anthon expressed her confidence in Fearrey to lead the county into a year of unprecedented change. She said Fearrey has maintained a measure of humour over the past term of office, which has been appreciated.

Anthon noted that Fearrey first served as Warden in 1974. He is only the second person in county history to serve six terms as Warden and the second to have served three consecutive terms.

"He has added another element to our history," Anthon said.

"That doesn't mean I'm ever going to do this again," Fearrey retorted; to which, Anthon quipped, "You have to, until you get it right."

Elva Bates seconded the nomination.

There were no other nominations for the position of Warden.

Fearrey thanked the members of County Council for their vote of confidence.

"I think this year is going to be an exceptionally busy year for us," Fearrey said.

Among the evening's guests was MP John O'Reilly, who offered his congratulations to Fearrey.

"On behalf of the government of Canada, we wish you well and thank you for taking an interest in your community," O'Reilly said. "It's a very trying time in our history, with the downloading. There are a lot of changes coming and as your federal representative I can offer support."

Warden's comments

"Life and change comes to us like a bullet these days, fast and unforgiving," Fearrey said. "County politicians and local politicians are no exception. The pressing challenge is change to get better, quicker. That applies to every walk of life and every profession.

"In these times, there are always amazing possibilities for people who rise to the occasion. In this term, on behalf of the people who put us here, that's what our council must do... rise to the occasion. I must rise to the occasion with you. The Warden can only lead. What we do, and what we accomplish, we will do together.

Fearrey asked the councillors which they thought was more important, the present, or the future.

"Obviously, it's the future, and that's what we must decide in the present," he stated. "As we face the challenges ahead, the real challenge for county council this year, probably more so than ever, will surface early in the year when we discuss the assessment, especially on commercial properties. There will be a lot of options for us. Some options will benefit some municipalities and will be detrimental to others."

Fearrey said it will be difficult, at times, for council members to think of the well-being of the county ahead of their own municipalities.

"I urge you to think about wearing your county hats, because what benefits you today, may not benefit you tomorrow. There are a variety of things happening and you must think about what's good for this county and the citizens of this county and not always what is isolated in your own community."

He gave the example of policing costs, noting that there may be some cost savings for some municipalities to pay their own policing cost, as opposed to paying through a county levy. He pointed out that municipalities such as Anson, Hindon and Minden, with its school and arena, would be expected to generate more police costs than neighbouring municipalities. But the neighbouring municipalities use the services which are provided in Anson, Hindon and Minden

(more on page 3)

They didn't say "Stop"

Hospital projects continue on track

The Haliburton Highlands Health Services Board will be moving ahead with its capital planning in spite of the visit to the district of the provincial Health Services Restructuring Commission (HSRC).

The commission was in Peterborough last week examining the delivery of health services through the four counties of Haliburton, Victoria, Peterborough and Northumberland. Hospital boards and other stake-holders within the district were invited to make submissions to the board.

The HHHS was represented by Chair Hugh Nichol, past chair Paul Heffer, vice chair David Coulson and executive director Foster Loucks. The board's written submission outlined the extensive planning and work which had brought the HHHS into existence and its over-all vision for the development of the capital projects and an integrated health system for the service area.

During the board's presentation, the members stressed the need for a quick response, especially in regard to the capital projects. "The meter is running and we are proceeding with our architect to complete the drawings so that construction can begin in the spring," Nichol

(more on page 16)

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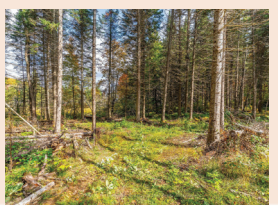

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